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ABSTRACT

Observations of and interviews with teachers and administrators in three elementary and three secondary schools provided support for the hypothesis that the social organization of the school as a workplace affects the fruitfulness of staff development efforts and the effectiveness of the school as a whole. This report reviews the relevant literature on organizational theory and role theory, applies these theories to the school setting, and presents the findings of the research based on these theoretical approaches. The first of two sets of findings centers on the character of the school as a workplace in which teachers' role expectations inhibit or encourage collegiality and openness to innovation. The character of the school is explored in terms of the kinds of work practices followed; the degree, location, frequency, practicality, relevance, reciprocity, and inclusivity of staff interactions; the status, knowledge levels, and role competence of the individual staff members; and the general and specific influence of the principal. The second set of findings focuses on characteristics of influential staff development efforts, notably the degrees of collaboration, collective participation, focus, and time involved. The relationship between school effectiveness and each characteristic considered in both sets of findings is explored as each characteristic is discussed. (PGD)

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THE POWER OF ORGANIZATIONAL SETTING:

SCHOOL NORMS AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Presented at the annual meeting
of the
American Educational Research Association
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I. INTRODUCTION

This paper reports a one-year study[1] to explore some of the ways in which the social organization of the school as a *workplace* bears upon teachers' involvement in and receptivity toward new practice and upon their involvement in formal or informal occasions of "learning on the job." Such work assumes particular relevance for urban school districts that, faced with declining enrollments and a stable cadre of teachers, are turning increasingly to district-sponsored staff development as a vehicle of school improvement and the management of change.

Two broad contributions are intended here:

First, the present line of work builds on the descriptive case study research in organizational change by specifying the norms of interaction and interpretation that characterize the school as a *work* setting, by speculating on the bearing of those norms for practices of school improvement, and by formulating propositions to guide future work.

Second, the reported work contributes to the design and conduct of teacher and administrator training curricula by revealing those aspects of school organizational life that prove critical to reform but which are currently unaddressed either in university curricula or in district programs of staff development. Further, the present work may serve to improve the prospects for successful ventures in planned organizational change by specifying some of the implications for action on the part of school principals or staff development consultants.

A. METHODS

The study was conducted as a focused ethnography (Erickson, 1977) drawing on prior work to give substantive guidance upon the methodological resources of ethnography and sociolinguistics to generate new discovery and to add depth and specificity. Six urban, desegregated schools (three elementary and three secondary) were

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selected to represent a range of involvement in schoolwide projects of staff development and a range of demonstrable school success.

One elementary and one secondary school were selected as sites with "high success" and "high involvement" in formal programs of staff development; from these schools, we sought insight into staff development's contribution to school success. One elementary school and one secondary school were chosen as "high success, low involvement" schools; from these schools we expected to learn what untapped contributors to success might be incorporated into future programs of staff development in the district, and to learn how teachers sustained quality instruction. Finally, one elementary school and one secondary school were selected as "low success, high involvement" schools; in these schools, we hoped to learn what aspects of the work setting or of the staff development programs had limited the programs' influence on school success. (See Table 1.)

In a nineteen week period, interviews were conducted with fourteen members of the district's central administration, 105 teachers and fourteen administrators in six schools; observations were conducted in the classrooms of eighty teachers, in six staff development (inservice) meetings, and in the hallways, lunchrooms, faculty meetings, lounges, offices, and grounds of the six schools.

Interviews were semistructured, given direction and comparability by an inquiry matrix and discussion guide prepared in the first stages of the study. In elementary schools, interviews were sought with the building principal and all members of the faculty. In secondary schools, interviews and observations were concentrated on the administrative team and a purposive sample of teachers.

B. GUIDANCE FROM PAST WORK: AN ORGANIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

McLaughlin and Marsh (1978) have speculated that one of the reasons for the failure of many of the educational reforms of the 1960's and early 1970's was the underestimation of teacher training needs. A broader ground for failure, we propose, might be the absence of attention to social organizational features and contexts in which changes were attempted, and in terms of which staff development activities assume particular relevance. (See also Schiffer, 1980; Miller, 1980; Fullan and Pomfret, 1977; Mann, 1976; Gross, Giacquinta and Bernstein, 1971; Berman and McLaughlin, 1978).

Following the recent literature on school organization and organizational change (Sarason, 1971; Goodlad, 1975; Berman and McLaughlin, 1978; Herriott and Gross, 1979; and others), we have cast staff development of any sort as a change intervention, calling

TABLE I

SUMMARY CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS

DESCRIPTIVE CHARACTERISTIC	ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS			SECONDARY SCHOOLS		
	Carey	Smallwood	Westlake	Park HS	Springer JHS	Reed JHS
SUCCESS	Low/moderate	High	High	Low	High	High
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	High Schoolwide faculty participation in two week training in instructional improvement, with classroom follow-up	Low Individual teachers take classes, workshops	High Three year faculty and principal training in mastery learning as one of five pilot schools. Weekly inservice, classroom observation	High Two year collaboration with Teacher Corps for school-based training Faculty group participation (one-third) in two week instructional improvement training	High Group participation (one-third) in two week training in instructional improvement, with classroom follow-up	Low Individuals' attendance at mastery learning training (one week, with follow up observation)
BUSING FOR INTEGRATION	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes
PAIRED SCHOOL FOR INTEGRATION	yes	no	yes in early stages; not presently	N/A	N/A	N/A
ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION:						
White	37.0%	54.0%	56.0%	27.1%	45.0%	40.3%
Black	56.0%	2.1%	3.8%	3.5%	6.3%	51.0%
Hispanic	3.1%	41.4%	34.0%	64.5%	46.0%	5.7%
Oriental	3.6%	2.3%	4.6%	3.6%	1.8%	3.0%
American Indian	0.0%	.7%	1.9%	1.3%	.8%	.4%

up questions about the way that the school as a workplace creates possibilities for and sets limits on the development of new practice. By this argument, staff development is an instance of organizational intervention on some scale and in some fashion. The peculiarly organizational character of the school stands not as some broad, undefined (and only mysteriously consequential) "context," but is argued here to be the heart of the matter.

The existing literature on schools as organizations and on organizational change in schools, while incomplete, offers a substantial basis for proposing that the role and impact of staff development are bound in powerful ways to the organizationally (normatively) defined possibilities for and limits on professional action. Ideas that gain (or fail to gain) currency, practices that are awarded or denied a serious trial, relationships that are sought or avoided are all in major respects accorded greater or lesser relevance on the basis of what *going* to school or *working* at school amounts to in American education, in a particular community or district, even in a particular school. For all of their proclaimed isolation, or independence, teachers and administrators are not in fact free agents who coincidentally share physical space with others. If the measure of "effective" staff development is in the first instance the trying out, mastering, and continuation of promising practice in schools and classrooms, researchers (like teachers) must take into account the boundaries of required, encouraged, permitted, or prohibited practice. With respect to the role of staff development in urban schools, researchers must account additionally for the ways in which rapid and imposed change may bring change in (and dispute over) those role boundaries.

On the basis of prior work, then, one can speculate that the school as an organized workplace is sufficiently powerful to govern the nature and extent of innovation, quite apart from the merits of the innovation itself or the way in which it is "packaged."[1] Prevailing norms of interaction among colleagues appear to influence how new ideas are introduced, how new demands are made felt, and how changes are accommodated. Particularly at issue here are the nature of role definition, the shape of role relationships and the degree to which existing role expectations permit or encourage the very practices intended by a staff development program (Fullan and Pomfret, 1977; Lieberman and Miller, 1979; Miller and Wolf, 1979).

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[1]Much of the literature on staff development has concentrated on the design of the staff development program itself (in a demonstrable effort to establish substantive relevance), with at best passing and broad reference to organizational context.

By some descriptions of school work life, reliance on others as sources of insight, knowledge, experience or skill is periodic at best (Lortie, 1975) and is typically confined to requests for advice in the first two years of teaching (Fuchs, 1969). Established classroom practices are preserved against others' scrutiny by the widely shared and enacted belief that differences in practice are "matters of philosophy" (Metz, 1978), judged by considerations of personal preference and not by the introduction of systematic evidence bearing on demonstrable effects. A predominating pattern of independence is reportedly supported by an established and widespread tolerance for diverse practice, which in turn is supported by the stated belief that personal preference and independent trial and error are adequate bases on which to judge good practice.

In effect, we are presented with a view in which the school exerts considerable influence over teachers' or administrators' latitude to innovate; we are, at the same time, persuaded of a work situation in which such organizational power is masked by the daily experience of working independently, often out of the sight and hearing of fellow professionals. The organizational, or "social" reality (Lieberman and Miller, 1979) appears unmatched by an organizational perspective (Sarason, 1971).

C. CONTRIBUTIONS OF ROLE THEORY

From a sociological perspective, role theory provides a means for the systematic study of work settings through the conceptualization and measurement of expectations for acts in situations. Applying this theoretical perspective to schools, highlighting aspects of norm and role (McGrath, 1968; Jackson, 1966; Gross, Mason, and McEachern, 1958) offers a sociological view of schools as organizations or social settings in which persons' behavior and perceptions are grounded in shared expectations for what "going to school" amounts to. Adopting such a stance in characterizing the "culture" of the school, Sarason (1971) stresses:

> The first point emphasized is the *complexity of each role*--its demands, built-in conflicts, relationship to other types of roles, and relationship to the overall system. Attention to this point is independent of considerations of personality, which, although of obvious importance, too often obscure the nature of the role. Once one understands the role of the teacher and principal, the importance of personality factors becomes more clear. (1971, p.4)

Gross, Mason, and McEachern (1958) underscore the importance of abandoning assumptions of role consensus, either within or among role

groups; areas of consensus, they claim, must be determined empirically and situationally. Their claims are well-supported by their own study of the role of the school superintendency in the state of Massachusetts; findings of that study underline the place of multiple peer reference groups and their respective norms of intra- and intergroup relationships in any considerations of intervention and change.

Jay Jackson's (1966) "conceptual and measurement model for norms and roles" offers a basis on which to articulate social organization in precisely such situationally-specific and role-specific terms. Jackson's method incorporates assumptions about role complexity, role consensus, and role repertoire that are consistent with other promising developments in role theory, and centers on the measurement of patterns of approval and disapproval for a specified inventory of acts in situations.

A complementary approach to the study of situationally salient norms of interaction is suggested by Kjolseth's (1972) distinction among "background," "foreground (or categorical)," "emergent (or endogenous)," and "transcendent" grounds of shared social knowledge. One might distinguish, for example, expectations for young persons' deference to adults in a community generally (background expectations) expectations for student deference to teachers in school (foreground or categorical expectations), and expectations for particular students' deference to particular teachers in particular classrooms (emergent or endogenous expectations). In some classrooms, students do not violate norms of deference by calling teachers by their first names; in other classrooms, such an act would be viewed by students and teachers as a violation of the norm.

Finally, there are transcendent norms governing what is *potentially* relevant in the future, i.e., potentially relevant, meaningful, and appropriate behavior or interaction. Given a configuration of background, categorical, and emergent norms bearing upon the interactions within and between principal groups in the school, there appear to be a specifiable array of potential options for subsequent interaction; some interactions may be less well grounded (less conceivable to persons) than others when history and present practice are taken into account. Such expectations can be expressed in terms of what is possible here, in this school, i.e., what is both desirable and possible. The salience of transcendent norms bears particularly upon discussions of staff development and the adoption of change by persons, groups, or organizations.

There are likely to be situational and role-related differences in the range and type of enacted "role repertoire" (Little, 1978) or

configuration of reportedly approved and disapproved acts (Jackson, 1966) characteristic of teachers and administrators from one school to the next, or from one class of schools to another (e.g., elementary versus secondary). To be effective, staff development activities may have to tap the specific expectations that comprise the role repertoire of administrators and teachers in specific schools and under specific circumstances.

II. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Two lines of discovery emerge, each giving rise to a set of propositions to guide further quantitative study and the practical design of staff development programs. A first set of findings centers on the character of the school as a workplace, and on the norms of interaction by which teachers' investment in continuous professional growth is fostered or eroded. A second set of findings bears upon the way in which staff development programs might be designed and conducted to build on and contribute to work relations conducive to professional growth.

A. THE SCHOOL AS WORKPLACE: CHARACTERISTICS CONDUCIVE TO INFLUENTIAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT

First, the school as a workplace proves extraordinarily powerful. Without denying differences in individuals' skills, interests, commitment, curiosity, or persistence, the prevailing pattern of interactions and interpretations in each building demonstrably creates certain possibilities and sets certain limits. Those aspects of work that appear most consequential are those that are least often studied, least visible in any clear or systematic way to teachers (though sometimes the subject of complaints), and least often addressed in programs of improvement. Most at issue here are the nature and extent of collegial relationships among teachers and between faculty and administrators, and the nature of the stance adopted toward present practice and new ideas. Teachers' vivid portrayals of the job show how routine work arrangements and daily encounters with other adults in schools strongly shape expectations for "being a teacher." Their descriptions led us to characterize

schools and groups within schools by their participation in norms[1] for shared work (collegiality) and norms for the analysis and evaluation of practice (experimentation, or continuous improvement).

In their training and throughout their work, many teachers are taught that good teaching is self-evident, that good teaching can be mastered alone by a kind of trial and error accumulation of miscellaneous devices which at least get teachers through the day, and that teachers can get help (at the risk of their self-respect) by asking others. This vision of teaching as a lonesome enterprise is powerfully confirmed by teachers' daily experience in many schools. Persistent expectations about joint work by teachers place stringent limits both on collegiality and on experimentation, and therefore on the ability of schools to adapt to changing circumstances and changing student populations, and on the ability of teachers to improve their practice.

We are led from a focus on professional improvement as an individual enterprise to improvement as particularly an organizational phenomenon. Some schools sustain shared expectations (norms) both for extensive collegial work and for analysis and evaluation of and experimentation with their practices; continuous improvement is a shared undertaking in their schools, and these schools are the most adaptable and successful of the schools we studied.

In sum, two norms appear critical to school success and bear in important ways on the role and influence of staff development.

Expectations for Shared Work: A Norm of Collegiality. These are expectations for teachers as colleagues. One of the principal ways in which teachers characterize the buildings in which they work

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[1]The use of the term "norm" here highlights the social and collective nature of these expectations. Without denying that there are differences among individuals (i.e., that some persons are more curious, self-confident, independent than others), teachers' accounts reveal shared expectations to be powerful organizational forces. They are not simply matters for individual preference; they are instead, based in shared knowledge of the behavior--the talk and the action--that is appropriately part of being a teacher. Such shared knowledge is accumulated in the course of daily interaction on the job. It is displayed in small and large ways, day after day, as teachers go about their work. It is the basis on which persons engage with others and on which they interpret what they see and hear.

is by whether the faculty is "close" and by whether teachers routinely "work" together. The variations on these themes are considerable. Expectations for shared discussion and shared work distinguish one building from another; some buildings are reportedly (and observably) more "collegial" than others. "Work together" is most usefully elaborated as an array of specific interactions by which teachers discuss, plan for, design, conduct, analyze, evaluate, and experiment with the business of teaching.

To the extent that school situations foster teachers' recourse to others' knowledge and experience, and to shared work and discussion, teachers are likely to favor some participation in staff development; to the extent that they foster a belief that there is nothing to learn from others or that each teacher must pursue his independent course, staff development will hold little appeal.

Staff development appears to have greatest prospects for influence where there is a prevailing norm of collegiality. In each of six schools, we looked to teachers' accounts of daily work and involvement in learning on the job to reveal the nature of norms of collegiality.

Expectations for Analysis, Evaluation, and Experimentation: A Norm of Continuous Improvement. These are expectations about the business of teaching. By the nature of the talk they hear, the advice they are given, the meetings they witness, and the appraisals they receive, teachers learn a stance toward classroom practice. They learn either to pursue the connections between teaching and learning with aggressive curiosity and healthy skepticism, or to take as self-evidently effective those tactics that appear to sustain some measure of interest, achievement, and decorum among a reasonably large number of students.

To the extent that the teachers believe "learning on the job" to be the exclusive task of the beginning teacher, they are unlikely to view staff development as an integral part of work in schools, i.e., a feature of the work that bears equally on everybody. To the extent that teachers view improvements in knowledge and practice as never ending, they may value staff development and place increasingly stringent and sophisticated demands on the nature and quality of assistance. Where analysis, evaluation, and experimentation are treated as tools of the profession, designed to make work better (and easier), and where such work is properly the work of the teacher, teachers can be expected to look to staff development to help provoke questions, organize analysis, generate evidence of progress, and design differences in approach.

The relative power of these competing views of practice is particularly at issue in desegregating schools, where persons are asked to recast their shared aims (e.g., by adding goals of equity to goals of academic achievement), to judge the adequacy of their classroom practices by new criteria (e.g., by effects on intergroup relations as well as by effects on cognitive understanding), and to do both of these while living in the fishbowl of a large-scale social experiment.

In sum, staff development appears to have greatest prospects for influence where there is a prevailing norm of analysis, evaluation, and experimentation--a norm that may be unsupported by persons' actual experiences in learning to manage new and unfamiliar circumstances and that (in teachers' eyes) calls for a stability and a security that are in short supply as schools integrate.

These two critical norms are shaped in practice through specific interactions, described below.

1. An Inventory of Work Practices

As teachers describe their work, they replace broad interpretations (e.g., a "close" faculty) with situationally specific portrayals of daily interaction. Drawing from interviews and from observations in six schools, we have constructed an illustrative inventory of teachers' interactions with each other, with administrators, specialists, and staff developers. Each of the characteristic interactions displayed in Figure 1 can be specified by the relevant and probable actors (*who* interacts with *whom*), by its social location (classroom, faculty lounge, department meeting) and by the business at hand (exchanging materials, designing curriculum, swapping classroom war stories). Arguing the merits of an approach with the principal is thus understood to be a different event from wrangling over the same approach with fellow teachers; and either of those events assumes different import when conducted alone in a hallway than it does when played out in a faculty meeting in the presence of others.

Each of these situated interactions places more or less extensive demand on teachers' time, knowledge, experience, and good will. Each contributes in different measure to persons' competence, confidence, influence, and satisfaction. Each appears to be more or less powerful in fostering schoolwide norms of collegiality and experimentation. And each, finally, is more or less firmly a part of "being a teacher" in any one of the six schools.

FIGURE I

AN ILLUSTRATIVE INVENTORY OF CHARACTERISTIC TEACHER INTERACTIONS IN SIX SCHOOLS

Lend and borrow materials.
Create a shared file of materials.
*Design and prepare materials.
Review materials or books.
Assign materials or books to grade level or course.
*Design curriculum units.
*Research materials and ideas for curriculum.
*Write curriculum.
*Prepare lesson plans.
*Review/discuss existing lesson plans.
Ask for project ideas.
Ask for classroom management ideas.
Ask for help with specific problems of instruction.
Ask for help with specific discipline problems.
Praise other teachers.
Criticize others.
Refer one teacher to another for an idea.
*Credit new ideas and programs.
Discredit new ideas or programs.
*Persuade others to try an idea/approach.
Dissuade others from an idea/approach.
Describe to others an attempt to try something new.
Make collective agreements to participate in a program (e.g., inservice).
*Make collective agreements to test an idea.
Trade teaching assignments/groups.
*Invite other teachers to observe.
*Observe other teachers.
Argue over theory, philosophy, approach.
Confront other teachers on issues of race (e.g., "disparaging remarks").
*Analyze practices and effects.
Praise individual students or classes.
Criticize or complain about individual students or classes.
*Teach others in formal inservice.
Make reports to others in meetings.
*Teach others informally.
*Talk "publicly" about what one is learning or wants to learn.
Attend inservices as groups or teams.
Talk about social/personal life.
Play cards.
Have a beer on Fridays.
Present evidence for student "staffing."
Spread the word about good classes or workshops.
Offer reassurance when others upset.
Ask informally about what is being covered in other grade levels, classes.
*Convert book chapters to reflect new approach (e.g., mastery learning).
Act as a "buddy" to new teachers.
Suggest that others "try this."
Divide up administrative chores.
Team teach (voluntary).
Team teach (involuntary).
Participate on committees.
Plan how to use new curriculum packages.
Defend or explain specific classroom practices.
Plan how to handle new grade level or course assignment.
*Design inservice.
Work on presentation for conference out of building.
Reach group agreement on solutions to schoolwide problems.
Decide how to use aides.†
Train aides.†
Complain about aides.†
*Evaluate performance of principals.
Give advice to others when asked.
Make suggestions without being asked.

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*Critical practices of success and adaptability.

†Elementary schools only.

2. Characteristics of Work Practices

a. *A Range of Interaction in Six Schools*

Teachers distinguish interactions they typically pursue from those involvements that are "none of my business," "not my job," or "not right." While there are, predictably, variations among individual teachers in any single building, there also appear to be prevailing *patterns* of approved and disapproved interactions in each of the six schools. Lending and borrowing materials and asking for occasional advice are favored modes of interaction in all buildings, but advocating the adoption of a new idea is acceptable in just four of six schools and is actively encouraged by teachers in only one school. Extensive discussion of teaching practice ensues in three faculty lounges, but typically stops short of any invitation to observe. Teachers in five buildings spoke of their willingness to work together to resolve problems related to student behavior (e.g., being late to class), but in three of those buildings were hesitant to take a collective stand on interpreting curriculum in the classroom. Interactions pursued routinely in one school are considered out of line in another; interactions thought useful by one group of teachers may be dismissed as a waste of time by another; and involvements that receive official sanction and support in one school may go unrewarded in another.

Thus, schools are distinguished from one another by the interactions that are encouraged, discouraged or met with some degree of indifference. From the large array of interactions which we observed and which could somehow be called "collegial" in character, four classes of interactions appear crucial. School improvement is most surely and thoroughly achieved when:

> Teachers engage in frequent, continuous, and increasingly concrete and precise *talk* about teaching *practice* (as distinct from teacher characteristics and failings, the social lives of teachers, the foibles and failures of students and their families, and the unfortunate demands of society on the school). By such talk, teachers build up a shared language adequate to the complexity of teaching, capable of distinguishing one practice and its virtues from another, and capable of integrating large bodies of practice into distinct and sensible perspectives on the business of teaching. Other things being equal, the utility of collegial work and the rigor of experimentation with teaching is a direct function of the concreteness, precision, and coherence of the shared language.

Teachers and administrators frequently *observe* each other teaching, and provide each other with useful (if potentially frightening) evaluations of their teaching. Only such observation and feedback can provide shared *referents* for the shared language of teaching, and both demand and provide the precision and concreteness which makes the talk about teaching useful.

Teachers and administrators *plan, design, research, evaluate, and prepare teaching materials together.* The most prescient observations remain academic ("just theory") without the machinery to act on them. By joint work on materials, teachers and administrators share the considerable burden of development required by long-term improvement, confirm their emerging understanding of their approach, and make rising standards for their work attainable by them and by their students.

Teachers and administrators *teach each other* the practice of teaching. In the most adaptable schools, most staff, at one time or another, on some topic or task, will be permitted and encouraged to play the role of instructor for others. In this way, the school makes maximum use of its own resources.

These four types of practices so clearly distinguish the more successful from the less successful schools, the more adaptable from the less adaptable schools, that we have termed them the "critical practices of adaptability."

The six schools display considerable variation in the range of critical practices that prevail. Range of interaction is grasped most readily as the sheer number and diversity of activities that teachers and administrators take for granted as part of their work. In Figure 2, the range of characteristic interactions for each school has been displayed as (1) the percentage of the *total* inventory; (2) the percentage of all "critical practices." Schools are thereby distinguished on the basis of specific support for discussion of classroom practice, mutual observation and critique, and shared efforts to design and prepare curriculum. Presumably, a school could exhibit a relatively narrow range of interactions, all of which were instrumentally directed to professional improvement. Or a school could conceivably show support for a broad range of interactions that touched only sporadically and superficially upon central issues of classroom practice. While our main interest here is the range of critical practices characteristic of each school, we acknowledge that the

FIGURE 2

RANGE OF COLLEGIAL INTERACTION
IN SIX SCHOOLS

SCHOOLS by level	RELATIVE SCHOOL SUCCESS	RANGE OF INTERACTION	
		Range of Total Inventory Characteristic of This School	Range of "Critical Practices" Characteristic of This School
Elementary Schools			
Carey	Relatively Less Successful	27%	22%
Smallwood	Relatively More Successful	47%	33%
Westlake		83%	100%
Secondary Schools			
Park High	Relatively Less Successful	21%	17%
Springer Jr. High	Relatively More Successful	34%	28%
Reed Jr. High		64%	83%

prospects for persons to stimulate or strengthen those practices might be contingent upon teachers' and administrators' present commitment to (or avoidance of) other complementary or competing practices.

On the whole, the relatively more successful schools appear to be those that support the broadest range of interactions by which teachers together talk about, watch, and conduct the practice of teaching. That is, these are schools that in the course of ordinary work foster collegial attention to the nature and effects of classroom practice. These findings have given rise to the following propositions:

The greater the proportion of total interactions focused on the "critical practices" of talk, observation, preparation and exploration (teaching each other), the higher the value placed on interdependence and the greater the contribution to norms of collegiality and evaluation/ experimentation.

The greater the number and diversity of interactions by which teachers plan, prepare for, observe, analyze the practice of teaching, the higher the value placed on interdependence and the greater the prospects that teachers' interactions will influence school success.

The more restricted the number and diversity of interactions ("critical practices"), the greater the value placed on independence, the greater the indifference or resistance to shared work and the less the prospect that teachers' interactions will influence school success.

The greater the range of prevailing interaction, and the higher the value placed on professional interdependence, the greater the prospects that involvement in staff development will expand teachers' repertoire of practices and will contribute to a norm of collegiality.

The more restricted the range of prevailing interactions, the more important will be the ability of staff development to stimulate norms of collegiality and experimentation as a condition for influence.

The greater the distance between the range of interactions envisioned by staff development and those enacted by teachers and principals, the more likely that schools will be viewed as initially "resistant" to involvement in staff development.

b. *Social Location: Places Where Critical Interactions Occur*

In successful and adaptable schools, all four classes of "critical practice" occur widely throughout the building and throughout the work week; training sessions, faculty meetings, grade or department meetings, hallways, classrooms, office and teachers' lounge. Collegial experimentation is a way of life; it pervades the school. Comparisons and contrasts among schools led to five propositions:

The greater the range of social locations in which teachers interact with others around matters of practice, the greater the volume of opportunities for shared work and the greater the prospects that teachers' interactions will influence school success.

The greater the range of social locations in which teachers interact with others around matters of practice, the higher the visibility of such interaction to teachers and students and the greater the contribution to a norm of collegiality.

The greater the range of social locations in which teachers take up the business of teaching (as distinct from social or administrative topics), the greater the contribution to a norm supporting analysis, interpretation, and experimentation.

The greater the range of locations in which teachers pursue collegial work, the greater the opportunity for work considered "staff development" to be integrated as part of the work day, and the greater its prospects for influence.

The greater the range of school settings in which staff development can stimulate or strengthen collegial interaction among teachers, the greater the prospects for building a norm of collegiality.

c. *Frequency of Interaction*

In a work situation where time is a valued, coveted, even disputed form of currency, teachers can effectively discount any interaction by declaring it a "waste of time." Thus the sheer frequency of interaction among teachers must be taken as a clue to its relative importance. The more frequent the interaction, the more likely that it assumes the status of a "habit." In the most collegial schools, teachers talk about teaching daily over the lunch table and in other small, cumulative ways act as colleagues on a continual basis.

The temptation, clearly, is to associate frequent interaction with professional growth. On the evidence, however, it appears that frequency is inseparable from judgments of worth and relevance; where teachers believe that shared talk or work will contribute to their knowledge, skill or satisfaction, frequent involvement confirms a habit of collegiality and analysis and permits effects of collegiality to become apparent. Where teachers are in doubt about the usefulness of these involvements, however, frequent contact appears to reduce interest in collegial work. Thus:

> *The greater the frequency of interaction, the greater the prospects for it to* build or erode *commitment to collegiality and the more salient are teachers' views of its utility, interest, and importance.*

d. *Focus and Concreteness: The "Practicality" of Interaction*

In successful and adaptable schools, interaction about teaching is consciously and steadily focused on *practice,* on what teachers do, with what aims, in what situations, with what materials, and with what apparent results. The focus on practice makes the interactions more immediately useful and therefore more likely to be sustained. And crucially, a focus on *practices* as distinct from *teachers* helps to preserve self-respect and eliminate barriers to discussion; the *utility* of a practice is thus separated from the *competence* of a teacher.

Here, interaction about teaching is described as speaking specifically to the complexities of the classroom. The talk is *concrete,* "practical." This is not to say that it is not philosophical or theoretical, because teachers report that interactions which provide a broad perspective on teaching have been most helpful. It is, rather, to say that the philosophy or theory must always be brought to the ground of specific actions in the classroom.

Attainment of interaction which can tie theory to concrete practice is not instant; the cumulative development of a shared language of teaching becomes crucial here. The more powerful and fully developed the shared language, the greater the facility with which broad perspectives can be applied to specific practices in the classroom. Observation becomes critical, a willingness to observe and be observed in a useful, critical fashion. The following propositions illustrate the possibilities:

The more evident the tie to classroom practice in teachers' interactions with others, the greater the opportunity for those interactions to be viewed as useful, relevant, and satisfying and the greater the prospects that they will influence success.

The more evident the tie to (scrutiny of) classroom practice in teachers' interactions with others, the greater the potential risk and the more demanding the requirements for "support" (e.g., clear rewards for participation) as a condition for collegiality.

The more consistently evident is the tie to classroom practice in teachers' interactions, the greater the repertoire of resources on which persons can rely in managing change, and the greater the influence on schools' adaptability and teachers' sense of efficacy.

The more concrete the language known to and commanded by teachers and others for the description, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of teaching practice, the greater the probable utility of the interaction and the greater the potential influence on teachers' practices.

The more widely permitted and encouraged the use of language that is precisely descriptive and analytic, the more likely that "concrete" understanding of practice will be revealed in interaction, and the greater the prospects that interactions will influence teachers' practice.

The more widely used the language of description and analysis, the more it exposes the knowledge, skill,

and experience of teachers and administrators, and the greater the potential risk to professional standing and self-esteem; thus the greater the influence of prevailing norms that support or inhibit such interaction.

The more concrete the language by teachers and others for the descriptions, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of practice, the greater are the prospects that persons will reduce risk ("threat") by separating judgments of specific practices from judgments of personal worth and competence, and the greater the prospects for a growing commitment to norms of collegiality and experimentation.

The more permissible and regularly practiced is reciprocal observation, the greater the opportunity for interactions to be made "concrete," the more likely that persons will view collegial interactions as useful and influential.

The more firmly established and widely accepted are teachers' expectations for talking about, observing, planning, and learning about classroom practice with colleagues, the greater the receptivity to staff development and the greater the prospects for its influence.

e. *Relevance of Collegial and Experimental Work*

In successful and adaptable schools, collegiality and experimentation are made *relevant to*, an integral part of, the occupation and career of teaching. Teacher evaluations, access to resources, release time and other perquisites are clearly tied to collegial participation in the improvement of practice. Two propositions summarize the findings here:

The more relevant the interaction--the more clear it is that participation in critical practices of discussion, observation, shared planning, and learning are required to satisfy the formal and informal obligations of the job--the greater the prospects that the interaction will influence teachers' practices and school success.

The more demanding the interactions and the more pressing the circumstances, the greater will be the perceived risk in participation and the more salient will be official sanctions, in generating participation.

f. *Reciprocity in Interaction*

In successful and adaptable schools, interactions about teaching are seen as *reciprocal*, even when they involve persons of different status (principal versus teacher) or different function (staff development consultant versus teacher). In part, reciprocity means an equality of effort by the parties involved. In part, reciprocity means an equality of at least an exchange of benefits. In part, reciprocity means equal humility in the face of the complexity of the task, and of the limits of one's own understanding. But crucially, reciprocity means *deference*, a manner of acting and speaking which demonstrates an understanding that an evaluation of one's practices is very near to an evaluation of one's competence, and which demonstrates great care in distinguishing the two and focusing on the first. Four propositions reflect the range of findings:

The greater the reciprocity reflected in interactions during which classroom practice is discussed, observed, planned, and taught, the greater the contribution to a shared norm of analysis and experimentation and the greater the prospects for influence on school success.

The more consistent and stringent the focus on classroom practice, the greater the demands for reciprocity in interaction, and the greater the prospects for resistance in its absence.

The more extensive a teacher's experience, the greater will be the demands for reciprocity in interaction with others.

The greater the degree of reciprocity evident in teachers' and administrators' interactions, the greater the support for a norm of collegiality and evaluation/experimentation and the greater the prospects that staff development will exert influence.

g. *Inclusivity: Participants in Critical Interactions*

In adaptable and successful schools, interactions about teaching tend to be *inclusive*; a large proportion of the faculty participates, is part of the group of innovators. Even where smaller groups explore new options for teaching, they are mindful of the consequences for other staff and prepare thoughtful strategies for including others

or for preserving their good will (or at least neutrality). Five propositions capture the possibilities in the present findings:

The greater the number and variety of staff who endorse and participate in practices of discussion, observation, planning, and exploration, the higher the value placed on interdependence and the greater the prospects for those interactions to influence school success.

The greater the range of staff engaged in interactions that are collegial or experimental, the more predictably and successfully will those interactions take into account group interests and obligations, and the more assured will be persons' support for the interaction.

The more closely that persons' collegial interactions or their experimental efforts touch upon actual practice, the more pressing will be the demand to accommodate others' interests and obligations.

The greater the range of participants engaged in critical practices of discussion, observation, preparation, and teaching, the higher the value placed on interdependence with others and the greater the prospects for staff development to exert an influence.

The more narrow the range of participants engaged in selected key practices, the less immediate the influence of staff development, the more likely will be initial indifference or resistance and the greater the requirements for a strategy that stimulates broader participation.

The dimensions of interaction we have described here--range (number), focus, inclusivity (actors and locations), reciprocity, relevance, concreteness, and frequency-- can be viewed conceptually as a way of mapping the prevailing work interactions in a school; tactically, they suggest dimensions of influence in designing practical programs of assistance. In either event, their interrelated character must be clear, their combined effect evident. As an analytic convenience, we have formulated propositions to reflect the influence of each dimension separately. Properly considered, each proposition should be prefaced, "all other conditions being favorable, or at least known." Thus, interactions that are properly reciprocal may only prompt complaints if they

focus on a narrow range of trivial concerns; reciprocity is not compelling, it seems, without relevance and concreteness. Talk that aims at concrete detail and that exhibits the needed professional deference may have limited utility where observation remains taboo; broadening the range of permissible practices appears to broaden the effect as well. And so on.

3. Characteristics of Participants

If the practices of talking, watching, planning, and teaching about classroom practice--as ordinary parts of work in schools--are in fact consequential to school success, then a remaining question is: Who is likely to be engaged in those activities? Do some characteristics of *persons* lead some staff more than others to these crucial interactions? Three characteristics appear relevant:

a. *Status*

Who among teachers, administrators, counselors, specialists and others has the right or the obligation to *participate* in work that is collegial or innovative in the ways that have been described here? Further, who has the right to *initiate* work along those lines? In effect does one's formal status as teacher or administrator, department chairman or committee member, influence one's capacity to join in or initiate shared discussion, mutual observation, shared planning and preparation, or the design and conduct of inservice education? And does the informal status that accrues from a history of good or bad work lead people to be credited or discredited as advocates of such work?

Not surprisingly, norms of collegiality and experimentation are built and sustained over time by the words and deeds of staff with high enough status--formal and informal--to command the attention and following of others. In all schools that staff characterize as highly collegial, teachers view the principal as an active endorser and participant in collegial work; they trace support to teachers and administrators held in high regard, including some "old guard" teachers, some department or committee chairmen, some assistant principals. Thus, the status of an actor, both ascribed (e.g., position) and achieved (a reputation as a master teacher) tends to limit the rights of the actor to *initiate* and to *participate* in collegial experimentation. In some schools, such rights are limited to principals, department chairs, and some influential teachers. In the more successful and adaptable schools, rights to initiate and participate are more widely distributed, rely less on formal position, and are variable by situation. The greenest teacher who just happens to have taken a course of interest to other faculty is more free to

initiate, participate in, and even lead some collegial work *in that situation*. Three propositions emerge:

> *The greater the status and authority of participants who endorse and enact "critical practices," the more evident the sanction for participation and the greater the prospects for influence.*
>
> *The greater the range of positions (status) from which persons can initiate collegial or innovative efforts, the greater the prospects that such work will occur with enough regularity to influence school success.*
>
> *The more evident is the tie to actual practice and the greater the potential risk to persons' professional standing and self-esteem, the more restricted will be the rights to initiate shared work and the more closely they will be linked to formal status.*

b. *Technical Knowledge and Skill*

At any given time, actors' technical skills and knowledge tend to limit their latitude to initiate, participate in, or lead collegial work. Particularly where a faculty has established a direction and developed an approach and a language, teachers who have not shared in the prior developments find the "ante" too high; however, these persons can and have been brought up to speed where specific arrangements are made to provide support and to find joy and virtue in steps which the older hands attained much earlier. On the whole, we are inclined to see technical skill more as a consequence of, rather than as a precondition for, collegial experimentation in this sense: in the absence of the other social characteristics of interaction, technical skill will not produce adaptability, but where the social requirements of adaptation are met, technical skill can be increased progressively.

> *The greater the shared technical competence in describing, analyzing, observing, planning for, and teaching about practice, the greater the likelihood that teachers will find collegial interaction useful and the greater the prospects that such interactions will influence school success.*

c. *Social or Role Competence*

Finally, in successful and adaptable schools, the staff have learned social or "role" skills. Playing teacher to students is different from playing teacher to a teacher. Daily interaction with students in a classroom is not preparation for providing a useful classroom observation for an older, more experienced, and higher status teacher.

The crucial matter of *deference*--the behavioral and linguistic distinction of practices from persons and their competence--particularly requires role-taking skill.

Such role-taking is not a universal skill. Rather, it tends to be learned where it is defined and required as a condition of collegial work. And in general, the skill is teachable.

On the whole, teachers in less successful schools were not markedly less *approving* of collegial roles than were their peers in the more successful schools: Teachers in the more successful schools were, however, more often openly *confident* of teachers' and administrators' abilities to act skillfully as observers, partners, advisors.

Similarly, teachers in three of the four more successful schools expressed greater *tolerance* for persons' efforts to learn the appropriate social skills; they acknowledged that in the early stages of collegial work some awkwardness was likely, some errors of tact probable. In all three of these schools, tolerance increased when *groups* of teachers or administrators struggled at the same time and in the same ways to master new practice.

In sum, social or role competence is essential to collegial and experimental work; under conditions of reciprocity, that competence is more rapidly acquired.

4. The Influence of the Principal

By virtue first of office and then of performance, principals are in a unique position to establish and maintain the important norms of collegiality and experimentation, and to promote and foster the critical practices of talk about practice, observation of practice, joint work on materials, and teaching each other about teaching. Other characteristics of principals and of the situation aside, our observations indicate that principals can promote those norms and practices in four primary ways; by announcing, enacting, sanctioning, and defending expectations for precisely those practices as central features of the work.

We are less interested here in the distinctions between broadly effective and ineffective actions than in exposing how *generally effective* tactics can be marshalled *specifically* in support of collegiality and experimentation. To this end, for example, we note that teachers credit principals who state clearly their expectations for teachers' performance; however, we place less emphasis on the general worth of clearly stated expectations than on the degree to which those statements *overtly* favor work that is *collegial, analytical*, and *experimental*. The general argument is:

> *The greater the range of tactics by which the principal explicitly supports norms of collegiality and experimentation, the greater the prospects that those norms will prevail.*

a. *Announcing Expectations*

Principals support norms of collegiality and experimentation by *announcing* expectations for shared talk, shared work, frank review of present practice, and investigation of alternative approaches.

The first issue here is the extent to which expectations for collegial work and for the routine analysis and improvement of practice are expressed with the same degree of force and the same commitment as expectations for completing administrative work, for sustaining an orderly classroom, for establishing rapport with students, for conducting smooth community relations, and the like. Findings suggest that:

> *The more clearly that principals' stated expectations endorse collegial work among teachers, the greater the prospects for stimulating or sustaining collegiality in a building.*

> *The more clearly that principals' stated expectations endorse careful and continuous scrutiny of practice, the greater the prospects for stimulating innovation and experimentation.*[1]

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[1] This proposition is also consistent with findings from the Rand study that "principals need to give clear messages that teachers may take responsibility for their own professional growth" (McLaughlin and March, 1979, p.92).

A second issue is the degree to which expectations are announced overtly and publicly. The first faculty meeting of the year proves by several accounts to be a powerful ceremonial occasion, an opportunity at the beginning of the work year to state a set of preferences, to describe what they call for and to justify their importance. Five of the six principals reported that they used the first faculty meeting for exactly these purposes, and their claims were confirmed by teachers' independent accounts. A proposition is:

The greater the array of "public" occasions on which the principal states expectations for collegiality and experimentation, the more clear will be the official support for those interactions and the greater the prospects for building the appropriate norms.

A third and key issue is the degree to which expectations for collegiality and experimentation gain in clarity by being expressed as *practices*. On the whole, principals' descriptions of their stated expectations suggest that collegiality and experimentation simply do not have, in most schools, the same practical imagery as other job obligations. Principals outline their expectations that teachers will be in school, that they will sign in and out, or that they will sponsor clubs or activities. There is no equivalent list of specific practices by which teachers will demonstrably act as colleagues and by which they will demonstrably reveal scrutiny over and improvement of practices. For example, there is no stated expectation that teachers will watch each other teach. The resulting proposition is:

The greater the range of specifically elaborated practices by which collegiality and experimentation can be expressed, the greater the support for norms of collegiality and experimentation.

Finally, expectations appear to take hold more readily if they are announced with some regularity, often enough and over a long enough period of time to be taken seriously. Thus, while principals and teachers alike agree on the symbolic force of the "first faculty meeting," they also stress that more frequent announcements make those words more than rhetoric. The proposition is:

The more frequently stated the expectation that teachers will work together as colleagues and that they will analyze and evaluate their own and others' practice,

the greater the support for norms of collegiality and experimentation.

b. *Enacting Expectations*

Principals appear to build norms of collegiality and experimentation when their *own* behavior demonstrates or "models" those norms. Thus, in three buildings, principals reported that "I act as I expect teachers to act."

The first issue here is the extent to which "modeled" expectations are *specifically collegial and experimental*. In effect, we are proposing a particular version of that "visibility" for which principals are routinely praised.

Second, principals' enactments of collegiality and experimentation appear most powerful when they display a certain reciprocity, and when they occur often enough to be widely visible and credible.

Finally, the effect of interactions that are reciprocal, concrete, and relevant mounts over time; norms appear to be built incrementally and cumulatively as principals persist in practices that "model" collegiality and close scrutiny of practice.

This suggests that the relative frequency with which principals display "instructional leadership," and the relative balance and complementarity of these and other role obligations, may be issues of importance in subsequent inquiry and in programs of training and support.

Propositions are:

The more clearly and consistently that principals' daily interactions with teachers reflect reciprocity and interdependence, the greater the support for a norm of collegiality.

The greater the range of situations in which the principal visibly pursues a careful description, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of practice, the greater the influence on a norm of experimentation and continuous improvement.

The more closely that principals' interactions with teachers touch concretely upon matters of practice, the greater the potential utility of the interaction and the greater the principals' influence on norms of collegiality and experimentation.

The more closely that principals' interactions touch upon actual classroom practice, the greater the potential risk to teachers' status and self-esteem, the greater the likelihood that teachers will seek to limit or control the interaction, and the greater the salience of reciprocity in fostering collegiality and experimentation.

c. *Sanctioning Behavior*

Principals appear to build (or erode) norms of collegiality and experimentation by the way that they visibly sanction teachers' activities. By the accounts of teachers and administrators, principals control three powerful resources. Each of these resources may be used to greater or lesser degree to encourage, ignore, or discourage the collegial or innovative efforts of teachers.

First, principals control the distribution of certain internal resources and rewards: They can shuffle schedules, change assignments, budget for materials, organize or disband teams, set the agenda for meetings. Second, principals effectively limit or expand teachers' access to outside resources by their decisions about special proposals, consultants, release time, and the like. Third, principals formally and informally evaluate teachers' performance, rendering more or less public judgments that distinguish a good job from one considered mediocre or lacking.

In addition, where norms of collegiality and experimentation seem most firmly entrenched, the value of shared work and regular improvement is reflected not only in informal judgments but in formal criteria for evaluation. Propositions are:

The greater the range of sanctions that principals use to reward collegiality and experimentation and the greater the range of sanctions applied against isolation and indifference, the greater the prospects for principals' influence on norms of collegiality and experimentation.

The greater the use of relevant, highly valued sanctions (evaluation and public "good favor"), the more visible and powerful will be expectations for collegiality and experimentation, and the greater the power of the principal to build those norms.

The more widely applied (inclusive) the sanctions directed at collegiality, experimentation, and pluralism, the more likely that those norms will prevail.

d. *Protecting Teachers' Efforts*

Principals may confirm teachers' commitment to shared work and to analyzing and improving practice by *protecting* persons who act in this fashion against outside pressures and internal strains.

Teachers praise principals who know how "the system" operates and who are skillful in preserving teachers' interests and initiatives while satisfying district requirements. By virtue of specific practices and organizational arrangements, the principal in effect made it safe and acceptable for persons (including administrators) to work *toward* the improvement of practice.

On the whole, it is less clear how principals protect against other, related sources of strain that emerge as groups of teachers become differentially involved in, attracted to, and rewarded for collegial efforts to describe, analyze, interpret, and improve curriculum and classroom practice. This is an issue of particular import in secondary schools.

For this set of role performances, by which principals apparently protect teachers' efforts to build and sustain norms favorable to school success, present data are too limited to support even tentative propositions.

In sum, collegiality and experimentation appear to be supported (or not) by the specific nature of administrators' announced expectations, their routine allocation of administrative resources and rewards, their daily interactions with teachers in meetings, classrooms, and hallways. In some schools, the resources of the principalship seem turned in viable ways to cultivating norms of collegiality and experimentation. As principals announce, model, sanction, and protect particular practices, they reveal a greater or lesser command over an entire *repertoire* of tactics for organizational change generally and for the strengthening of work

relations particularly. Thus, the final proposition is:

> *The broader the repertoire of tactics for announcing, enacting, sanctioning, and protecting interactions that are collegial and experimental, the greater the principals' influence over norms that bear on school success.*

To this point, we have tried to describe and analyze characteristics of adaptable schools. For us, then, the probable effectiveness of staff development is a function of its attention to those characteristics. Staff development will be more effective to the degree it accommodates, builds on, stimulates, and nourishes the norms of collegiality and experimentation and the critical practices of talk, observation, joint work on materials, and teaching each other to teach.

B. CHARACTERISTICS OF INFLUENTIAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development programs prove differentially powerful in influencing teachers' expectations for student performance, their perspective on teaching and learning, or their actual classroom practice. Programs' influence in these substantive arenas appears tied in large degree to their relative success in accounting for, building on, or altering the prevailing work relationships in a school. We have concentrated on revealing those features of staff development that teachers and administrators credit with influence.

1. Collaboration

Staff development activities seen by teachers as most useful and influential are described as *collaborations* between staff development personnel and a school, not something which staff development does to the school but something they do together, each playing a part.

Collaborative arrangements confirm that collegial experimentation is *relevant* to teaching as an occupation and as a career. Individual requirements and aims, district requirements and aims and realities of work at the building level are more readily reconciled and dealt with affirmatively when a partnership is negotiated.

> *The more collaborative the program, the greater its prospects for demonstrating relevance to individual, school, and district interests, and the greater the prospects that it will exert influence.*

Collaboration provides the opportunity to build the shared language of teaching not only among teachers in the school, but also among staff developers and teachers. Aims, approach, requirements, reciprocal expectations--all are made clearer. More substantial commitments from school staff are possible.

The more collaborative the approach, the more frequent and structured will be the occasions for gaining clarity about aims, perspectives, methods, and roles, and the greater the prospects for measurable influence.

In collaborative work between staff developers and schools, necessary reciprocity may be established between staff developers and teachers or administrators. Particularly, by inviting a collaboration, staff developers are then able to *model* collegiality and experimentation, as one of several partners in a team. The crucial matter of *deference* can be displayed, practiced, and perfected.

The more collaborative the approach, the greater the opportunities for mutual contribution to aims, perspectives, methods (i.e., for reciprocity) and the greater the prospects that staff development will build a commitment to collegiality and experimentation.

The more closely that collaboration engages persons in the examination of classroom practice, the greater will be the demands for reciprocity and the greater the prospects that staff development will "fail" in its absence.

The greater the reciprocity evident in the interactions between staff development and school personnel, the greater the prospects for influence.

2. Collective Participation

Effective staff development activities foster *collective* participation of the staff in a school. Teachers are not seen as individuals who are drawn out, changed, and put back, but are seen as members of an organization, whose adoption of innovations depends on the characteristics of the organization, and whose knowledge as members of that organization can be turned to creating the conditions

under which all staff in the school will progress as they work together. It is important that school staff attend training as groups, even more important that they *implement* as groups, strengthening their collegial and experimental practices even as they adopt a specific new practice. In all:

> *The more firmly established the norms of collegiality and experimentation, the greater the prospects for securing the involvement of numbers large enough to influence practice.*
>
> *The more clearly stated and widely accepted the value of collective participation, the greater the prospects for staff development to influence teachers' practice.*
>
> *The greater the ability of staff development to secure agreements for a collective participation in implementation, the greater its prospects for influence over teachers' practices.*
>
> *The greater the distance between practices required by collective implementation and practices favored by school staff, the less the prospects for influence and the greater the demands on staff development to cultivate approval of specific central practices.*

3. Focus

The offer of shared work turns out to be something of a fruitless exercise in the absence of a shared idea; teachers and administrators involve themselves in staff development most willingly and consistently when there is something of demonstrable relevance to work *on*. Programs have been most powerful in influencing schoolwide practices in and out of the classroom where teachers and others have worked together to accomplish a known set of aims and have concentrated on understanding and applying a specific set of ideas.

Further, staff development is credited with influence not only where it focuses on a specific set of shared aims, ideas, or methods, but also where it exhibits *concreteness* in language and practice. Thus, a teacher who praises the performance of the mastery learning instructors remembers that they worked with teachers on the wording of instructional objectives, on analyzing the precise skills required

to meet those objectives, on the sequence of instruction and practice reflected in lesson plans, and on the preparation of tests.

And finally, staff development consolidates and extends its effects by *fostering* focused interactions among teachers and others in the course of their ordinary work. Thus, to sustain the focus of mastery learning required that teachers scrutinize their own practice and reveal their observations in discussion with others. Staff development in some schools was designed to create the time and award the assistance needed as teachers and principal working together became more and more practiced in the concrete description and analysis of classroom practice.

In sum:

> *Staff development exerts influence to the extent that it (1)* introduces *or agrees upon and sustains a focus that is recognizably tied to the felt aims, obligations and experiences of teachers and administrators; (2)* exhibits *a degree of specificity and concreteness in discussion and practice that supports the translation of ideas into practice; and (3)* promotes *focused interaction among teachers and administrators in schools by arranging occasions in which school staff, working together, describe, analyze, interpret, plan for, or teach each other about some aspect of school practice.*

4. Time: Frequency and Duration of Staff Development

Mastering the practice of teaching is, according to one teacher, like learning to play a musical instrument. It takes time, practice, some tolerance for mistakes along the way, and some way of marking progress. With this image in mind, there are two separate but interrelated senses in which time has been taken into account in designing effective staff development. The first is a dimension of *frequency*: the sheer number of opportunities that teachers have to work on ideas and their application in classrooms. The second is a dimension of *duration*: an expectation for--and set of provisions for--*progressive gains* in competence and confidence. The central proposition is:

> *The more opportunities there are to grapple with an idea, the more numerous the opportunities to practice it, and the more frequent the interactions with consultants and fellow teachers to resolve problems*

and review progress, the more likely that promising ideas will find their way into classroom practice.

III. CONCLUSION

The demonstrable power of schools to build and sustain expectations for teachers' work with others and teachers' view of classroom practice confirms our view of staff development as a matter of organizational change. By celebrating the place of *norms* of collegiality and experimentation in accounting for receptivity to staff development, we place the matter of receptivity to staff development squarely in an analysis of organizational setting: the school as workplace.

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